

# In the United States Court of Federal Claims

## OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS

\* \* \* \* \*

DEBORAH EASTERBROOK,	*
	*
Petitioner,	*      No. 17-91V
	*      Special Master Christian J. Moran
	*
v.	*      Filed: January 2, 2018
	*
SECRETARY OF HEALTH	*      Stipulation; influenza (“flu”) vaccine;
AND HUMAN SERVICES,	*      tetanus-diphtheria-acellular pertussis
	*      (“Tdap”) vaccine; transverse myelitis
Respondent.	*
	*

\* \* \* \* \*

Randall G. Knutson, Knutson & Casey Law Firm, Mankato, MN, for Petitioner;  
Lara A. Englund, United States Dep’t of Justice, Washington, DC, for Respondent.

## UNPUBLISHED DECISION<sup>1</sup>

On December 28, 2017, the parties filed a joint stipulation concerning the petition for compensation filed by Deborah Easterbrook on January 23, 2017. Petitioner alleged that the tetanus-diphtheria-acellular pertussis and influenza vaccines she received on February 5, 2014, which is contained in the Vaccine Injury Table (the “Table”), 42 C.F.R. §100.3(a), caused her to develop transverse myelitis. Petitioner further alleges that she suffered the residual effects of this injury for more than six months. Petitioner represents that there has been no prior award or settlement of a civil action for damages on her behalf as a result of her condition.

Respondent denies that either of the vaccines caused petitioner to suffer from transverse myelitis, or any other injury.

---

<sup>1</sup> The E-Government Act, 44 U.S.C. § 3501 note (2012) (Federal Management and Promotion of Electronic Government Services), requires that the Court post this decision on its website. Pursuant to Vaccine Rule 18(b), the parties have 14 days to file a motion proposing redaction of medical information or other information described in 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-12(d)(4). Any redactions ordered by the special master will appear in the document posted on the website.

Nevertheless, the parties agree to the joint stipulation, attached hereto. The undersigned finds said stipulation reasonable and adopts it as the decision of the Court in awarding damages, on the terms set forth therein.

Damages awarded in that stipulation include:

**A lump sum payment of \$200,000.00 in the form of a check payable to petitioner. This amount represents compensation for all damages that would be available under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a).**

In the absence of a motion for review filed pursuant to RCFC, Appendix B, the clerk is directed to enter judgment in case 17-91V according to this decision and the attached stipulation.<sup>2</sup>

**IT IS SO ORDERED.**

s/Christian J. Moran

Christian J. Moran

Special Master

---

<sup>2</sup> Pursuant to Vaccine Rule 11(a), the parties can expedite entry of judgment by each party filing a notice renouncing the right to seek review by a United States Court of Federal Claims judge.

IN THE UNITED STATES COURT OF FEDERAL CLAIMS  
OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS

DEBORAH EASTERBROOK,	)	
	)	
Petitioner,	)	
	)	
v.	)	No. 17-91V
	)	Special Master Christian Moran
SECRETARY OF	)	
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,	)	
	)	
Respondent.	)	
	)	

**STIPULATION**

The parties hereby stipulate to the following matters:

1. Petitioner Deborah Easterbrook ("petitioner") filed a petition for vaccine compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-10 to 34 (the "Vaccine Program"). The petition seeks compensation for injuries allegedly related to petitioner's receipt of the tetanus-diphtheria-acellular pertussis ("Tdap") and influenza ("flu") vaccines, which vaccines are contained in the Vaccine Injury Table (the "Table"), 42 C.F.R. § 100.3 (a).
2. Petitioner received a flu vaccine on or about February 5, 2014.<sup>1</sup>
3. The vaccine was administered within the United States.
4. Petitioner alleges that the Tdap or flu vaccines caused her to develop transverse myelitis and that she experienced residual effects of this injury for more than six months.
5. Petitioner represents that there has been no prior award or settlement of a civil action for damages as a result of her condition.

---

<sup>1</sup> A Tdap vaccine was also ordered on the same date, but the records indicate that it was held for administration on a later date.

6. Respondent denies that the Tdap or flu vaccine are the cause of petitioner's alleged transverse myelitis or any other injury or her current condition.

7. Maintaining their above-stated positions, the parties nevertheless now agree that the issues between them shall be settled and that a decision should be entered awarding the compensation described in paragraph 8 of this Stipulation.

8. As soon as practicable after an entry of judgment reflecting a decision consistent with the terms of this Stipulation, and after petitioner has filed an election to receive compensation pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-21(a)(1), the Secretary of Health and Human Services will issue the following vaccine compensation payment:

A lump sum of \$200,000.00 in the form of a check payable to petitioner. This amount represents compensation for all damages that would be available under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a).

9. As soon as practicable after the entry of judgment on entitlement in this case, and after petitioner has filed both a proper and timely election to receive compensation pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-21(a)(1), and an application, the parties will submit to further proceedings before the special master to award reasonable attorneys' fees and costs incurred in proceeding upon this petition.

10. Petitioner and her attorney represent that they have identified to respondent all known sources of payment for items or services for which the Program is not primarily liable under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(g), including State compensation programs, insurance policies, Federal or State health benefits programs (other than Title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. § 1396 et seq.)), or entities that provide health services on a pre-paid basis.

11. Payment made pursuant to paragraph 8 and any amounts awarded pursuant to paragraph 9 of this Stipulation will be made in accordance with 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(i), subject to the availability of sufficient statutory funds.

12. The parties and their attorneys further agree and stipulate that, except for any award for attorneys' fees and litigation costs and past unreimbursable expenses, the money provided pursuant to this Stipulation will be used solely for the benefit of petitioner as contemplated by a strict construction of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a) and (d), and subject to the conditions of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(g) and (h).

13. In return for the payments described in paragraphs 8 and 9, petitioner, in her individual capacity, and on behalf of her heirs, executors, administrators, successors or assigns, does forever irrevocably and unconditionally release, acquit and discharge the United States and the Secretary of Health and Human Services from any and all actions or causes of action (including agreements, judgments, claims, damages, loss of services, expenses and all demands of whatever kind or nature) that have been brought, could have been brought, or could be timely brought in the Court of Federal Claims, under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-10 et seq., on account of, or in any way growing out of, any and all known or unknown, suspected or unsuspected personal injuries to or death of petitioner resulting from, or alleged to have resulted from, the Tdap or flu vaccinations administered on February 5, 2014, as alleged by petitioner in a petition for vaccine compensation filed on or about January 23, 2017, in the United States Court of Federal Claims as petition No. 17-91V.

14. If petitioner should die prior to entry of judgment, this agreement shall be voidable upon proper notice to the Court on behalf of either or both of the parties.

15. If the special master fails to issue a decision in complete conformity with the terms of this Stipulation or if the Court of Federal Claims fails to enter judgment in conformity with a decision that is in complete conformity with the terms of this Stipulation, then the parties' settlement and this Stipulation shall be voidable at the sole discretion of either party.

16. This Stipulation expresses a full and complete negotiated settlement of liability and damages claimed under the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, as amended, except as otherwise noted in paragraph 9 above. There is absolutely no agreement on the part of the parties hereto to make any payment or to do any act or thing other than is herein expressly stated and clearly agreed to. The parties further agree and understand that the award described in this Stipulation may reflect a compromise of the parties' respective positions as to liability and/or amount of damages, and further, that a change in the nature of the injury or condition or in the items of compensation sought, is not grounds to modify or revise this agreement.

17. This Stipulation shall not be construed as an admission by the United States or the Secretary of Health and Human Services that the Tdap or flu vaccines caused petitioner's alleged transverse myelitis or any other injury or her current condition.

18. All rights and obligations of petitioner hereunder shall apply equally to petitioner's heirs, executors, administrators, successors, and/or assigns.

**END OF STIPULATION**

111

Respectfully submitted,

PETITIONER:

Deborah Easterbrook  
DEBORAH EASTERBROOK

ATTORNEY OF RECORD FOR  
PETITIONER:

RANDALL G. KNUTSON  
KNUTSON CASEY LAW FIRM  
196 St. Andrews Drive  
Suite 100  
Mankato, MN 56001  
(507) 344-8888

AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE  
OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL:

Catharine E.

CATHARINE E. REEVES  
Deputy Director  
Torts Branch  
Civil Division  
U.S. Department of Justice  
P.O. Box 146  
Benjamin Franklin Station  
Washington, DC 20044-0146

AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE  
OF THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH  
AND HUMAN SERVICES:

Narayan Nair, M.D.  
Director, Division of  
Injury Compensation Programs  
Healthcare Systems Bureau  
U.S. Department of Health  
and Human Services  
5600 Fishers Lane  
Parklawn Building, Mail Stop 08N146B  
Rockville, MD 20857

ATTORNEY OF RECORD FOR  
RESPONDENT:

Lara A. Englund  
LARA A. ENGLUND  
Trial Attorney  
Torts Branch  
Civil Division  
U.S. Department of Justice  
P.O. Box 146  
Benjamin Franklin Station  
Washington, DC 20044-0146  
(202) 307-3013

Dated: 12/15/17